

South Coast Child Wellbeing Network Conference 2024

**Tuesday 10th
September 2024**

The Pavilion
2 Bong Bong Street, Kiama

Registration opens 8am | Conference from 8:30am until 4pm

Tickets
\$95

Big Emotions, Best Practice *Social and Emotional Wellbeing*

In celebration of Child Protection Week, we welcome clinicians and other professionals who work with children and their families to our annual conference.

This year we are excited to feature two keynote speakers, Lisa Gardiner and Kim Billington, as well as workshops facilitated by various professionals in their fields demonstrating different theories and practices to help support at-risk children and families.

Buy tickets at www.sccwn.org.au/events

Child Protection Week
1 - 7 September 2024

Keynote Speaker and Workshop 1: *Lisa Gardiner*

Keynote: Creating a Reparative Ecology

In a world that is full of change and uncertainty and on the back of a global pandemic, it is crucial that we can identify reliable scaffolding and support. The measures to keep us safe during the pandemic, have contributed to individuals and families experiencing gaps in relational and emotional development, and an increase in anxiety, depression, and ambivalence.

Consequently, children, young people and families in our communities are struggling to manage their feelings, thoughts and behaviours when impacted by daily stresses and unpredictable, challenging stressors. Concurrently and not surprisingly, an unprecedented number of professionals working in human services, health and education sectors are experiencing the symptoms of burnout and are exiting the workforce or wondering how long it will be before they do.

Considering this, I would like to share a framework that works towards hope, opportunities, and expectations. It uses a participatory approach so we can begin to shape our sphere of control. It creates a visible representation that is easily understood and highlights existing supports (and gaps), so we can plan what, when and how we begin the reparative process.

Conceived as a framework of supports surrounding a person. The framework comprises of 'requisite' elements required by the individual person, group, organisation, to cope and develop within an open system. The elements (ecological supports) are required to ameliorate between the person and the broader 'world' that is dense with stressors (positive, tolerable, and toxic).

The framework is visible and relatable for practitioners and can be used when working with children, young people, families, and communities. The presentation will provide a 'take home' process that can be used at work to enhance practice with service users and a personal / professional reflective process for practitioners, educators, and managers.

Workshop: Attachment Styles in Practice

The capacity to form stable and secure relationships is one of the most significant protective factors for individuals who have experienced childhood adversity. Understanding an individual's attachment style enables practitioners to recognise and promote resilience across the lifespan.

In this workshop, we will draw on elements of the attachment style to deepen our understanding of attachment and how to use this new knowledge in practice. Explore each of the attachment styles and how they reveal significant information about our biology, coping strategies, interpersonal styles, and parenting styles.

We will look at how our attachment styles can change, how we can improve our resilience and the risks to resilience. We explore how our attachment style impacts the way we work with children, young people and families and look at how others attachment styles impact on our professional confidence and at times wellbeing.

This workshop is based on The Attachment Style Interview (ASI), used to identify vulnerability in families in relation to mental health and was used in over ten years of psychosocial research on families. This research was conducted by Professor Antonia Bifulco and her team at the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies (CATS), Middlesex University.

Lisa Gardiner is one the directors at Secure Base Solutions (SBS). SBS is a trans-disciplinary consultancy working in human services, health, and education specialising in working with carers, families, complex systems, and organisations. SBS is an accredited provider of the Attachment Style Interview in Australasia and an academic partner with the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies, Middlesex University, UK. Lisa is trained in the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics through the Child Trauma Academy (US), and an organisational member of the Neuroleadership Institute.

Lisa has extensive experience working in government and non-government sectors as a practitioner, trainer, manager, and senior executive building sector capacity through practice, policy, and organisational development.

She has an ongoing interest in the wellbeing and safeguarding of vulnerable children nationally and internationally. Lisa has spent over fifteen years developing programs and practice frameworks for organisations working with vulnerable children and families from a neuro-developmentally informed evidence base.

Lisa has expertise in areas of attachment disruption and learning, grief and loss, mental health, trauma, and Out of Home Care. She has a strong commitment to working with individuals and organisations to develop leadership capabilities.

Keynote Speaker and Workshop 2: *Kim Billington*

Keynote: The Mystery of Everchanging BIG Emotions in Folktales

Kim will introduce how the practical skill of sharing a folktale with children, where ordinary people, with everyday BIG problems, which stir-up normal troublesome BIG emotions can become a brief therapeutic intervention.

Starting with our own connection to stories from our childhoods, Kim will demonstrate how our strengths and values-based identity is often shaped and developed from the characters, both fictional and real, that we are drawn to in middle childhood.

We naturally identify with the central character of any film, biography or novel, who faces daunting obstacles. We are encouraged by a cast of helpers, and where the light of hope is miraculously sustained. Stories offer a healthy perspective about the mystery of everchanging BIG emotions.

After telling a short folktale, Kim will invite listeners to explore the rich diversity and flow of emotions embedded within it. Kim will also teach some narrative therapy prompts to unpack the listener's values and become curious about their own life situation, revealing their unique skills and what is uniquely important to them.

Using a case example from her therapeutic work, Kim will demonstrate the possibilities to deepen therapeutic rapport, introduce discussions about life's problems and the understand the uncomfortable emotions we feel when facing difficult challenges.

Listeners will experience how folktales can activate the child's imagination as they step into the character's shoes, unlocking the potential to inspire a child to create a play-world within a counselling setting. Short therapeutic stories can support and extend play-based retellings by children using sand tray, drawing and dramatic play.

The healing power of folktales comes from the mysterious and ancient art of storytelling, where stories rich in metaphors and symbols speak to both children, and adults about how to survive and thrive in a world of unexpected challenges and BIG emotions.

Workshop: A Practical Opportunity to Learn the Art of Developing and Retelling a Therapeutic Folktale

In the Keynote, *The Mystery of Everchanging BIG Emotions in Folktales*, Kim will have told a short therapeutic folktale and supported the listeners to discuss in pairs the rich diversity and flow of emotions embedded within such stories, as well as hearing in detail about two boys' responses in a case study.

Carrying forwards this experience into the Masterclass, Kim will invite small groups of 4 -5 to work together creatively and collaboratively to develop a therapeutic story from a selection of short folktales provided. The short stories selected can be shared with children: reshaped and retold to suit a client's culture, gender, family make-up and situation.

Participants will also reflect about what they have found significant in their selected story using the narrative therapy question prompts from the Keynote.

Kim will offer practical guidance around the key elements of therapeutic storytelling and support the groups to share their selected story with the other groups as a: puppet-play/ dramatized retelling with a narrator/ radio play or other creative mediums that emerge.

Kim Billington has worked with children and families for over 30yrs in the fields of family violence, family separation, men's behaviour change programs, bereavement, crisis telephone counselling and as a PACFA registered clinical supervisor with the Monash Masters of Counselling team. Kim also offers group (max 6) and individual clinical supervision.

Kim's theoretical special areas include Narrative Therapy and CFT (Compassion Focused Therapy), Somatic psychotherapy, Mindfulness and creative expressive arts work with The Hero's Journey, Tree of Life and Sailboat of Life. <https://kimbillington.com.au/>

Kim is a trainer and presenter, delivering workshops for RAV, PACFA and the Sydney Centre for Creative Change, and holds a B.Ed, M. Couns & a Masters in Narrative Therapy.

Kim's first book, *A Counsellor's Companion: creative adventures for child counsellors, parents and teachers* as a way to pass forward her knowledges and learnings about ways to support children and families. Kim's passion is to make time and safe spaces to hear the voice of the child.

Kim's second book, *Counselling Conversations: 10 Powerful Interviews Seasoned Experts*, is a conversational exploration of counselling work from bereavement, trauma therapy, Circle of Security attachment, indigenous communities, art therapy, high school wellbeing, family violence and LGBTQI.

In 2024 Kim is released a new eResource for teens and adults called, *Metaphors Move Us*. This collection of 35 drawings with metaphors embedded, is supported by narrative therapy questions to explore a variety of life themes can also be used as a colouring activity.

Workshop 3: *Simone Potter*

Bush Magic Adventures

Simone Potter has been working with children in both counselling and teaching roles for over 25 years. Most recently she co-founded and has been running a Bush School called Bush Magic Adventures. As part of Bush Magic Adventures, she works closely with children on the autism spectrum, with complex trauma, ADHD and many other mental health and wellbeing challenges in a nature based play therapy setting.

In this workshop Simone will share with you some of the research behind the success of Bush Magic Adventures and nature based therapies in general as well as some of the techniques and strategies that teachers, counsellors and other professionals can implement in their work that can make a big difference to the lives of so many children and families.

Workshop 4: *Dr. Judy Pickard*

Supporting Parents to Support Their Children

After completing her training in Clinical Psychology in 2000, **Dr. Judy Pickard** has worked extensively with children, adolescents, and adults with complex mental health disorders.

Judy has further developed her interest in parent, child attachment through research, most recently evaluating the CaPES (Coaching and Parent Emotion Support) a coaching – based parenting program. Dr Pickard is a Senior Lecturer within the School of Psychology at the University of Wollongong, delivering the CaPES program at Northfields Psychology Clinic.

During her workshop, Judy will explore the concept of recognising parents as the most valuable support a child can have in developing their ability to manage their emotions, communicate well, reach their potential and have positive peer relationships. This workshop will also discuss how to engage parents and provide practical tips on effectively supporting parents, to support their children.